

San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

## San Bernardino County Museum's Bucky Ball raises \$53,000

*By Kristina Hernandez, Redlands Daily Facts*

Tuesday, May 17, 2016

REDLANDS >> Dinner and music under the stars brought more than 150 to the San Bernardino County Museum Saturday night to support the museum's cultural and STEM education programs.

Put on by the San Bernardino County Museum Association, the inaugural Bucky Ball brought in \$53,000.

"Museums play a vital role in our children's education," said Maggie Latimer, executive director of the Museum Association, in an event program. "Interactive exhibits and programs encourage young learners to become creative and engaged in the world around them."

Saturday's event began with introductions from Eric Castro, master of ceremonies, and Robert Christman, president of the Museum Association. But it was Museum Director Melissa Russo who noted the museum's importance to the region.

"Many of our young visitors come from well-to-do communities ... but a vast number of our young people, our young visitors come here from more challenging neighborhoods where vicious crimes and squalor circumstances are their experiences," Russo said. "It's those kids that desperately need us to help them change their bundle of experiences, to give them a glimpse of life bigger than their circumstances, to welcome them into the museum and provide them a field trip and after school experiences in biology, geology, history, paleontology and anthropology, because every single child is a potential genius and the museum can and will play a role in this region to help them discover this."

The San Bernardino County Museum, 2024 N. Orange Tree Lane, is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday and holiday Mondays.

Information: [www.sbcountymuseum.org](http://www.sbcountymuseum.org); 909-307-2669.

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# Muñoz runs local challenge to Ramos for county supervisor

By Kurt Schauppner, The Desert Trail | Posted: Wednesday, May 18, 2016 9:10 pm

TWENTYNINE PALMS — Donna Muñoz, who served as Supervisor James Ramos' field representative from February 2013 to February 2014, is now hoping to replace him.

Muñoz is the lone candidate challenging Ramos for his seat on the county board of supervisors in the June primary.

Soon after leaving her field representative position, Muñoz took a job as general manager of the Morongo Valley Community Services District and Fire Department.

Muñoz served as field representative to county supervisors Marsha Turoci and Barbara Riordan from October 1998 to November 1996.

She was the assistant county assessor from November 1996 to February 2000.

She served four terms on the Morongo Unified School District board of education, from November 1998 to November 2014.

"I was watching and talking to people," she said recently of her decision to run for the office.

"I have the experience, I can do the job," she said, adding that she feels she has more experience than Ramos.

Muñoz said she is not running against James Ramos the man but against James Ramos the supervisor who, she thinks, has not put enough time into the job.

"I feel like he hasn't really done the job. It is a seven-days-a-week job. I don't feel he has put the time in," she said.

There are unincorporated communities in the district that are not served by city councils or community service districts, she said, where the people need to know who their supervisor is.

"I have been to every single area of the 3rd District," she said. "I have been to the Sugar Loaf Property Owners Association twice. Mr. Ramos has not been there once. Last month, finally, his field rep showed up. You want to be able to see your supervisor."

She hopes to get lots of support from voters in the Morongo Basin.

"I am local and people in the Basin know I have worked hard for 25 years," she said.

"I would put the time into the job," she said of how she would be better than Ramos. "I would choose my staff very carefully."

She promises to train her staff in the importance of responding to constituents' concerns.

"Anybody who contacts the office needs to get a response," she said. "What I am hearing about is the lack of response. The first thing I would do is build a very strong staff."

Muñoz said she has conducted a grassroots campaign.

"I have had a huge amount of support from the Big Bear area," she said, adding that she has also gotten support from Barstow and Redlands.

Last weekend she attended the Yucaipa Music Festival.

"That's what I enjoy most about being a field rep. I enjoy being with the people," she said.

"I always knew I would be running a grassroots campaign," she said. "It would be mostly me just getting out there."

For more information on Muñoz, go online to [www.donnamunoz2016.com](http://www.donnamunoz2016.com).



## SAN BERNARDINO: Children's Fund gets Disney donation

By [MARK EADES](#)

2016-05-19 09:58:06



Stacy Iverson of the Children's Fund in San Bernardino thought it was a site visit, but when several people walked inside the doors, all wearing blue Mickey Mouse ears, she knew something was up.

"I thought we were going to have a little brief meeting to talk about the Children's Fund," she said.

The eight people were from the [Disneyland Resort](#) were actually there to surprise Iverson, president and CEO of the fund, with a check for \$60,000 - a grant from the resort as part of its Million Dollar Dazzle campaign.

"I feel like I'm in an absolute dream," Iverson said as she was given her own pair of blue Mickey Mouse ears to wear.

The Disneyland Resort team, known as the Million Dollar Dazzle crew, were led by Jessica Bernard, the Disneyland Ambassador. Bernard explained that the fund was picked as a recipient during May, National Foster Care month, for the work that it does in supporting foster youth in San Bernardino County.

San Bernardino Children's Fund gets big Disneyland donation



"We are giving away more than \$1 million dollars as part of this campaign in honor of Disneyland's 60th anniversary," Bernard said.

The campaign was announced by Michael Colglazier, president of the resort, on the park's birthday, July 17, 2015, as a way of giving back to the community.

Colglazier said the program focuses on community nonprofits that support children and families based in Orange County, and surrounding areas. The grants are given in \$60,000 increments at least once a month.

Iverson said the donation would be used to support scholarships for the foster youth in the area for college “so they can learn what they want to learn to follow their dream.”

Besides the donation, the fund also received 60 one-day park hopper admission tickets to the parks at the Disneyland Resort that will be distributed to foster children who have never been to Disneyland.

This was the 12th \$60,000 grant given out since the program started. The first group to receive an award was the [Girl Scouts of Orange County](#).

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By [Jose Quintero](#)[Print Page](#)

May 17, 2016 2:34PM

## Family of man killed by deputy holds press conference to show never-before-seen video

VICTORVILLE — The family of a [29-year-old Barstow man shot and killed by a San Bernardino County Sheriff's deputy last November](#) has scheduled a press conference for Tuesday afternoon.

The family and their attorneys are expected to share surveillance footage from a local motel that captured the incidents leading to the death of Nathaniel Harris Pickett Jr.

“This heartbreaking video (never shown before) of the shooting will be shown in an effort to appeal to the hearts of the citizens of this county to prevent such a horrendous act being perpetrated on any other innocent victims, especially those suffering from a mental illness,” a press release issued by the family’s attorneys reads.

According to previous reports, Pickett, who was convicted of obstructing an executive officer charges in 2006 and 2011, was shot and killed during an altercation with a sheriff’s deputy on Nov. 19 near the El Rancho Motel in Barstow.

Authorities said the deputy and a citizen volunteer were on duty when they witnessed a man hopping over a fence at the motel at approximately 9:07 p.m. The deputy stopped to question the man and sheriff’s officials said Pickett gave the deputy a false name and was uncooperative.

As the deputy attempted to handcuff Pickett, he attempted to run and a fight between the two ensued. Sheriff’s officials said Pickett struck the deputy “numerous times in the face and refused to comply with the repeated verbal commands to stop hitting him and move away.”

The deputy then shot Pickett and the “assault ceased,” sheriff’s officials said. Pickett was pronounced dead at the scene.

According to authorities, the deputy suffered multiple injuries, including broken bones, and was transported to a local hospital for treatment.

But Sharon Brunner, one of the family’s attorneys, claims reports of Pickett injuring the deputy are false and that a “random citizen driving by joined in and started beating” Pickett.

“Nathaniel Pickett Jr. was an unarmed 29-year-old African-American man who had committed no crime,” the press release said. “Mr. Pickett suffered from a mental illness. The video and recorded witness statements will show Mr. Pickett was not a danger to anyone despite prior media coverage. Mr. Pickett’s civil rights were violated and the video is clear proof that his death was unjustified, unwarranted and unconscionable.”

Leaders and representatives from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People are expected to attend the press conference as well.

<http://www.vvdailypress.com/article/20160517/NEWS/160519739>[Print Page](#)

San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

## **Mother of Barstow man shot and killed by sheriff's deputy demands prosecution**

*By Joe Nelson, The Sun*

Tuesday, May 17, 2016

VICTORVILLE >> The mother of a Barstow man who she says was fatally shot without justification by a sheriff's deputy and has video to prove it is demanding the deputy be prosecuted.

During a news conference Tuesday at the law office of Jim Terrell, Dominic Archibald and her Detroit attorney, Ernest L. Jarrett, showed video surveillance footage from the El Rancho Motel in Barstow the night of Nov. 19. Also in attendance was Essie Jackson, president of the Barstow branch of the NAACP.

The video, which includes surveillance footage from four cameras, shows a foot pursuit and physical altercation shortly after 9 p.m. between a sheriff's deputy and Archibald's son, Nathaniel Harris Pickett Jr., 29, who had been residing at the motel.

Archibald and Jarrett identified the deputy as Kyle Woods, a rookie deputy with a little more than two years on the force.

Although it is not clear in the video when the shooting occurred, the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department said in a news release at the time of the shooting that the deputy tried arresting Pickett, who according to court records has a history of resisting arrest, after giving the deputy a false name. A struggle ensued, and Pickett "struck the deputy numerous times in the face and refused to comply with repeated verbal commands to stop hitting him and move away. The deputy fired his weapon, striking the subject, at which time the assault ceased."

The deputy, according to the sheriff's news release, suffered multiple injuries including broken bones.

But the Sheriff's Department's version of events, according to Archibald and her attorney, do not match what is seen on the video surveillance footage from the motel.

Pickett is seen running down the motel corridor, where he stumbles and falls. As the deputy approaches Pickett, his back facing the camera, he appears to have his gun drawn. Pickett is seen sitting on the ground scooting backward, then appears to be laying flat on the ground and motionless.

The deputy grabs Pickett from behind and a struggle ensues, with the deputy seen punching Pickett repeatedly in the side of the head. A civilian, who may or may not have been a citizen volunteer riding with the deputy that night, is seen trying to assist the deputy in the struggle, but then moves away into the parking lot.

Moments later, Pickett lay motionless and the deputy lay slumped against the wall. Two other police officers or sheriff's deputies arrived on scene to assist.

"You will at no juncture see Mr. Pickett do anything that appears aggressive in nature," Jarrett said.

While Jarrett admitted the deputy's gun cannot be seen in the video, nor any gunfire or muzzle flash, he believes Pickett was shot as he sat on the ground and was scooting away from the deputy, and that Pickett ultimately died during the struggle after being shot.

Sheriff's spokeswoman Cindy Bachman said in an email Tuesday that the Barstow Police Department investigated the shooting and submitted its report to the San Bernardino County District Attorney's Office for review. She declined further comment.

"The investigation was submitted to our office on April 19 and it is currently pending review," district attorney's spokesman Christopher Lee said in an email Tuesday. "Once we complete our review, we will release the officer involved shooting report which is part of our standard protocol."

Jarrett said he will be meeting Thursday with representatives of the San Bernardino County District Attorney's Office, including Chief Deputy District Attorney Clark Hansen, to discuss the case.

Archibald, a retired Army colonel who said she was stationed in Iraq and Afghanistan and retired from service in 2014, said her son began seeing a psychiatrist in his early 20s and was mentally ill. He had previously attended Hampton University in Virginia and wanted to be an engineer.

She was at a loss for words about her son and how he died.

"I don't really know what to say," Archibald said. "There's no reason for this. It's heartbreaking."

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## Deputies find small arsenal during traffic stop in Muscoy

*By Michel Nolan, The Sun*

Wednesday, May 18, 2016

MUSCOY >> Deputies on Tuesday found a handgun, a dagger and three replica firearms during a routine traffic stop in Muscoy.

Initially, during the 4:45 p.m. stop at Cajon Boulevard and Short Street in Muscoy, deputies from the sheriff's Central Station spotted a black handgun behind the driver's seat, deputies said in a news release.

During a search of the suspects — Arturo Matute, 31 of San Bernardino and William Knight, 18 of Newberry Springs — deputies found individually packaged baggies of methamphetamine hidden inside Knight's clothing, coupled with evidence of drug sales, according to officials.

Matute and Knight were detained pending further investigation.

When deputies conducted the vehicle search, they located a face mask, the dagger, the three replica firearms and two billy clubs, according to a news release.

Matute and Knight were arrested on suspicion of possession of an illegal weapon and transportation of methamphetamine for sale.

Both suspects were booked into Central Detention Center, according to press release from the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department.

Anyone with information regarding this incident is urged to contact Central Station at 909-387-3545. Callers wishing to remain anonymous are urged to call WeTip Hotline at 1-800-78-CRIME or leave information on the website at [www.wetip.com](http://www.wetip.com).

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## WEST NILE: First virus-carrying mosquitoes in 2016 found in region (UPDATE)

By [SUZANNE HURT](#)

2016-05-18 12:28:46



Mosquitoes have tested positive in Riverside and San Bernardino counties for the first time this year, mosquito control officials said Wednesday, May 18.

A mild El Niño winter may explain why the virus appeared a month earlier than usual for San Bernardino County, said West Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District Manager Min-Lee Cheng.

Culex quinquefasciatus, or southern house mosquitoes, were found in Rancho Cucamonga, Ontario and Chino and confirmed to have the disease Monday.

Southern house mosquitoes collected last Thursday, May 12, in Palm Springs also tested positive, said Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District spokeswoman Jill Oviatt.

At least four Southern California counties have found West Nile in mosquitoes this year.

West Valley district officials expect virus transmission to be busy in 2016 due to weather, sporadic rain and drought. In 2015, the number of West Nile-carrying mosquitoes reached a 12-year high of 274 in that district.

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By [Mike Lamb](#)[Print Page](#)

May 18, 2016 12:46PM

## Firefighters seek county annexation

BARSTOW — The president of the Barstow Professional Firefighters Association urged the City Council on Monday to consider annexing the Barstow Fire Protection District into the San Bernardino County district.

"I want to make the suggestion that we go forward with the proposal and look into that wholeheartedly," Barstow Fire Protection District Firefighter John Wymore said. He told the Council that the district is losing too many experienced firefighters to retirement and other departments.

Wymore attended a Barstow Fire District budget workshop earlier in the evening which offered an optimistic outlook that the district could stabilize despite the struggle to successfully transition pension plans from the San Bernardino County Employees' Retirement Association to the California Public Employees Retirement System.

One of the options on the table if the district fails to stabilize is being annexed into the county district.

"This fiscal year we are projecting revenues to be \$4.7 million," Assistant City Manager Cindy Prothro reported during the workshop. "Expenditures are tracking at \$5.1 million and we project a shortfall of just over a third of a million (dollars), which is a little higher than what we projected earlier this year."

But Prothro said the one factor that has been difficult to track is retirements.

"Otherwise we would have been tracking on or just under budget for the shortfall," she said.

Prothro is expecting the district to end the 2015-16 fiscal year at a negative fund balance of \$1.2 million. But she said the district may see stabilization in 2016-17.

"We are expecting a loss of \$135,000, which includes lease payments for a fire engine of \$95,000," she said. "While we have another fire engine that needs to be replaced, our recommendation is not going after another engine (until) after the engine is paid off. We want to wait a year or two before we entertain acquiring another vehicle so we can help stabilize the district."

Mayor Pro Tem Tim Silva expressed concerns about maintaining proper staff levels.

"What it boils down to is what is our comfortable staffing levels," Barstow Fire Protection Chief Richard Ross. "Right now we consider that to be six (firefighters) per day is the bare minimum."

The department employs 18 firefighters besides Ross. But Wymore took issue with the staffing when speaking to the City Council.

"We (workshop) were talking about alternatives for the staffing. One of those that came up was reducing staffing at one of the fire stations in the district," Wymore said. "Currently, we run six firefighters a day and we are running more calls than ever. Last year we ran 5,500 calls — a little bit more than 5,500. That's the most calls ever run in a single year."

"This year we are on track to probably do 6,000. Right at that range if we continue on the same track. So this really concerns me."

Wymore said the district has been losing firefighters to retirement and to other fire departments. He said some of those firefighters are longtime employees in Barstow.

"In the last year to 18 months we have lost four guys. One to retirement and three others to departments that are paying considerably better than us. Unfortunately, this retirement thing is really kicking our butts. We are paying the largest portion of retirement and I can tell you that is why we are losing guys. No other reason than that."

"The captain that retired, he retired directly because of that. And the other three firefighters left because of that."

He asked if the fire board would consider the district taking on 100 percent of the pension portion until a solution is found.

Fire District board Chairman Carmen Hernandez called for more research before any decisions are made.

"Because what unfortunately happened the first time we took over we didn't have what I believe was all the information we should have," she said. "We also have to have some input from the firefighters and their association. I think we need more updates more frequently so everybody has more understanding."

*Mike Lamb can be reached at 760-957-0613 or [mlamb@desertdispatch.com](mailto:mlamb@desertdispatch.com). You can also follow him on Twitter @mlambdispatch.*

Inland Valley Daily Bulletin (<http://www.dailybulletin.com>)

## White House taps Rancho Cucamonga as example of transparency with police data

*By Liset Márquez, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin*

Friday, May 6, 2016



RANCHO CUCAMONGA >> Well before President Barack Obama's Police Task Force recommended making police activity data readily available to the public, this city was already providing that level of transparency for its residents.

Since April 2015 [Rancho Cucamonga's](#) public safety online dashboard allows residents to view real-time updates, showing response time from the San Bernardino County sheriff's substation and fire department.

After learning about Rancho Cucamonga's [online dashboard](#), the White House invited a contingent from Rancho Cucamonga to contribute to the Police Data Initiative.

"We were already publishing this dashboard long before the police data initiative staff put their mission together. They reached out to us because we were already doing what they want other agencies to do," said Capt. Danielle Boldt.

Cities participating in the initiative are asked to release three open datasets about policing activities over the coming months — response times, the number of crime incidents and the number of traffic incidents. But Boldt said Rancho Cucamonga already releases those figures almost as soon as they are available.

To improve transparency, the city's [online dashboard includes interactive data](#), charts and maps, said Donna Finch, a management analyst in the City Manager's Office. Data released as of March 2016 show the police department had an average response time of 3.8 minutes for emergency service calls; there were 3,483 crime incidents and 522 traffic incidents.

The one-day White House gathering April 22 allowed city officials to hear from other law enforcement agencies and cities about how they're releasing data to the public. Rancho Cucamonga's contingent included, Boldt, Finch and Darryl Polk, director of Innovation and Technology — all three have been involved in the city's dashboard.

For Polk, getting to meet officials from larger cities was very educational, "as far as lessons learned from other agencies."

"I partnered with Orlando, and Orlando has very different set of challenges that we have. Hearing those challenges and hearing how they met them was very valuable," he said.

There were about 175 representatives from 53 cities in attendance. Only six cities were from California, including Rancho Cucamonga, the only San Bernardino County city.

By publishing these three datasets, Boldt said, it is a tool for her staff to refer the public to the answers for their questions.

“So the community can get some intelligible information and get make some decisions, and reach their own conclusions,” Polk said. “We have our conclusions, but the exciting thing about this is it allows the community to challenge it or support it or have a dialogue about it.”

When Rancho Cucamonga was developing its dashboard, Polk said the goal was provide the raw data to the audience.

“We wanted it to be unfiltered data from the law enforcement,” he said. “The trick to that is there is some filtering that has to take place to protect the anonymity of the citizens, to ensure we don’t violate any government codes or legal codes that restrict the distribution of the information.”

This is not the first time the White House has invited representatives from Rancho Cucamonga.

In 2015, first lady [Michelle Obama recognized cities](#), including Rancho Cucamonga, for participating in the Let’s Move! City’s, Towns and Counties initiative.

Two years before that, [Rancho Cucamonga’s Public Library](#) was honored with the 2013 National Medal for Museum and Library Service.

As part of the police initiative, Rancho Cucamonga’s representative will participate in regular conference calls to provide updates on their progress.

“From here, we’re going to continue to keep our fingers on the pulse, as what the community wants to see,” Boldt said. “I believe this community needs to know what level of service they’re receiving from the police staff ... They are a very integral part of our overall policing of this city. No law enforcement agency can police without the support of their community.”

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## Cal State San Bernardino names first female provost

*By Staff reports*

Tuesday, May 17, 2016



Cal State San Bernardino has hired Shari G. McMahan as provost and vice president for academic affairs. She will become the first female provost at the Inland campus.

McMahan comes from Cal State Fullerton, where she serves as deputy provost.

She will begin work at CSUSB on Sept. 1, according to a statement from university president Tomas D. Morales.

“We are delighted to have someone of Shari’s knowledge, ability and talent to join us as CSUSB’s new provost and academic affairs vice president,” Morales said in the statement.

According to the university, McMahan will take over academic affairs from creative writing professor and well-known poet Juan Delgado, who has been serving as interim provost.

“I am thrilled to be selected as CSUSB’s next provost,” McMahan said in a statement. “I look forward to working with the faculty and administration to continue our efforts to

enhance student success, support faculty excellence in teaching and research and continue the good and important work in our community.”

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## Graduation rates climb but San Bernardino County students lag behind state averages

*By Stephen Wall, The Press-Enterprise*

Tuesday, May 17, 2016



Inland high school graduation rates continued climbing while dropout rates kept falling for the class of 2015, state data released Tuesday, show — but San Bernardino County students lag behind statewide averages.

In San Bernardino County, the graduation rate inched up from 78.7 percent to 80.7 percent, while the dropout rate fell from 12.2 percent to 11.4 percent.

Riverside County's 2015 rate improved from 85.2 percent to 87.4 percent. Meanwhile, the number of students who dropped out of school dipped from 9.3 percent to 7.7 percent.

Statewide, the [graduation rate](#) increased from 81 percent to 82.3 percent while the dropout rate fell from 11.5 percent to 10.7 percent. The percentage of graduates has been climbing steadily since the class of 2010 posted a 74.7 percent rate.

Specific groups of students improved, including Latinos, blacks and English learners.

“This is encouraging news any way you look at it, especially since the increase is occurring as we are introducing much more rigorous academic standards,” State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson said in a news release.

State dollars that were slashed during the recession are flowing back into classrooms. Schools have used the additional money to restore science, civics, arts and Career Technical Education programs, he said.

“But a lot of work remains” to ensure all students perform at high academic levels, Torlakson said.

The newly released data is for students who started high school in 2011-12. Rates are based on four-year information for the same group of students who entered ninth grade for the first time and were followed for four years.

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By [Rene Ray De La Cruz](#)[Print Page](#)

May 17, 2016 10:17AM

## Local leader ups reward amount to find photographer's attacker

HESPERIA — After [Daily Press Editor Steve Hunt announced that the paper was offering a \\$1,000 reward](#) for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the individual who attacked staff photographer David Pardo, one local politician offered to sweeten the award amount.

[After hearing that Pardo was brutally attacked by an unidentified man at Hesperia Lake on Tuesday](#), Hesperia Mayor Pro Tem Paul Russ told the paper that he matched the Daily Press reward of \$1,000.

During the Hesperia Chamber of Commerce meeting on Monday, Russ issued a challenge to local business owners to contribute to the reward money.

According to Russ, his challenge was well received, with several of those in attendance ready to contribute to the reward amount.

"When I heard that David was attacked for just doing his job, I was incensed," Russ said. "As a local leader, it was incumbent to step up to the plate and to match the reward amount for the arrest and conviction of the person who attacked David. Asking the business community to get involved makes this a community effort. So many people know David and they consider him a friend."

Russ said "we can't exercise our First Amendment rights" if photographers and reports are attacked in public and "our rights are stifled."

Pardo was approached by two Hispanic men while taking photographs at the lake for the Daily Press' upcoming summer guide. He had earlier taken photos of a woman feeding ducks and when he sought her permission to use the photo, she objected and wanted Pardo to delete the photos.

Pardo declined to delete the photos, as is company policy, but told the woman he wouldn't publish them. Some time later, the two men approached him and one demanded that he delete the photographs of the woman immediately. Pardo politely declined, then was punched without warning.

During the altercation, one man destroyed Pardo's camera equipment and then continued his assault on the photographer, punching, kicking and even stomping on him.

[Authorities announced Tuesday that they had arrested a man they believe to be responsible for the attack.](#)

"Freedom of the press is paramount to our freedoms," Russ said. "I will do everything in my power to insure that our freedoms are not trampled upon."

If you have information on the individual who attacked David Pardo, contact the Hesperia Sheriff's Station at 760-947-1500 or the We-tip Hotline at 1-800-782-7463.

*Rene Ray De La Cruz may be reached at 760-951-6227, [RDeLaCruz@VVDailyPress.com](mailto:RDeLaCruz@VVDailyPress.com) or on Twitter [@DP\\_ReneDeLaCruz](#).*

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San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

## Hesperia man accused of attacking photojournalist charged

*By Beatriz Valenzuela, San Bernardino Sun*

Thursday, May 19, 2016

VICTORVILLE >> The Hesperia man accused of attacking a Daily Press photographer while he was working at Hesperia Lake is scheduled to be in court Thursday, court officials said.

Steven Andrew Mancillas, 20, was charged in the case, said Chris Lee, spokesman for the San Bernardino County District Attorney's Office Thursday morning and booking records show he's expected at Victorville Superior Court Thursday afternoon.

A second person, Erika Ochoa, 21, also of Hesperia was also arrested in connection to the assault that left photographer David Pardo battered with a swollen jaw and face. A third person is still being sought by San Bernardino County sheriff's investigators.

The reported attack took place May 10 just before 5 p.m., sheriff's officials said.

Deputies were called to Hesperia Lake, 7500 Arrowhead Lake Road, for reports of a man who was taking photos of a woman and child without their permission. The caller then said the photographer, later identified as Pardo, was involved in a fight with at least two men.

The two men and woman all left before deputies could arrive.

Through an investigation, deputies learned the Pardo who was wearing press identification visibly and had taken a photo of a woman and her daughter. When he approached the woman to ask if he could have their names so the photograph could be used in a publication, she refused and demanded he delete the photo, according to reports.

Pardo tried to explain he couldn't delete it, but it wouldn't be used, investigators said.

Two men, one later identified as Mancillas, then allegedly approached Pardo and they attacked him. Mancillas reportedly threw Pardo's cameras and cell phone in the lake.

Ochoa was arrested Monday afternoon following a traffic stop of her vehicle. It wasn't clear if Ochoa was the woman who Pardo photographed at the lake.

The following day, Mancillas turned himself in at the Hesperia sheriff's station.

Anyone with information on this case of where the third person may be is asked to call 760-947-1500 or call Sheriff's Dispatch at 760-956-5001.

By [Paola Baker](#)[Print Page](#)

May 17, 2016 4:51PM

## Man, woman arrested, face felony charges in beating of Daily Press photographer

HESPERIA — San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department deputies announced Tuesday they arrested a man they believe [attacked a Daily Press photographer while he was on assignment](#) last week at Hesperia Lake.

Steven Andrew Mancillas, 20, of Hesperia, turned himself in to the Hesperia Sheriff's Station on Tuesday afternoon. Deputies said a woman, identified as Erika Aliyah Ochoa, 21, of Hesperia, also was arrested in connection to the incident, while a third suspect remains at large.

Mancillas and Ochoa were both booked on suspicion of robbery, assault and felony vandalism, authorities said. Mancillas remains in custody at the High Desert Detention Center in lieu of \$75,000 bail and is scheduled to appear in court at 12:30 p.m. Thursday.

Jail records show Ochoa also was arrested on suspicion of conspiracy to commit a crime. She was released from custody Tuesday afternoon, according to jail records, and currently has no court dates scheduled.

The incident occurred when Daily Press photographer David Pardo was taking photographs for the newspaper's summer guide at Hesperia Lake last Tuesday afternoon. A woman, later identified by deputies as Ochoa, objected to photos he had taken of her and wanted Pardo to delete them. He assured her the photos would not be published, but declined to delete the images, per company policy.

The woman told Pardo she would contact the Sheriff's Department, and deputies said they received a call about a man taking photographs of a woman and her daughter without their permission at 4:58 p.m. that day.

While Pardo and the woman waited for deputies to arrive, two men arrived in a white Nissan Altima and approached him. One man, identified by deputies as Mancillas, demanded that Pardo delete the photographs of the woman immediately.

Pardo politely declined, then was punched without warning. The suspect beat and kicked Pardo, destroyed Pardo's camera equipment and threw most of it in the lake. He also took Pardo's smartphone and threw it in the lake after noticing Pardo attempting to take photographs of the Nissan Altima that the group fled the scene in after the attack.

Hesperia Sheriff's Station deputies immediately began working the case, with deputies and detectives comparing notes on possible suspects. On Friday, deputies called Pardo to come in to view a photo lineup of possible suspects.

Pardo said he was able to positively identify the man responsible for the attack, and deputies said they sought and received a warrant for Mancillas' arrest.

Ochoa was arrested during a traffic stop where Walnut Street intersects Main Street and becomes Choiceana in Hesperia on Monday afternoon, according to jail records, and was taken into custody.

Pardo said he was "emotionally relieved" that two of the three alleged perpetrators were caught.

"I would like to give thanks to the Sheriff's Department for their work," Pardo said. "I hope this never happens to anyone ever again. I'm glad this dangerous person is off the streets."

He extended his thanks to professional colleagues who shared the story and to friends, family and the High Desert community for their support.

Anyone with information regarding this incident is asked to contact Detective Stoll at 760-947-1500 or Sheriff's Dispatch at 760-956-5001. Callers wishing to remain anonymous can contact the We-Tip Hotline at 1-800-782-7463 or visit [www.wetip.com](http://www.wetip.com).

*Paola Baker may be reached at 760-955-5332 or [PBaker@VVDailyPress.com](mailto:PBaker@VVDailyPress.com). Follow her on Twitter at [@DP\\_PaolaBaker](https://twitter.com/DP_PaolaBaker).*

<http://www.vvdailypress.com/article/20160517/NEWS/160519736>[Print Page](#)

San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

## Residents raise opposition to Sycamore Hills development in Upland

*By Liset Márquez, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin*

Tuesday, May 17, 2016



UPLAND >> A group of anonymous residents is protesting the city's approval of a [42-acre mixed-use development](#) near the 210 Freeway and Base Line Road interchange.

After nearly a decade in the works, grading has begun on the development, which will include as many as 400 new homes and a 10-acre shopping center [anchored by a 30,000-square-foot Whole Foods Market](#).

But Andrew Grundman believes the City Council erred when it recently relied on what he considers an outdated environmental report. Specifically, the review fails to adequately predict the potential traffic impacts Sycamore Hills Plaza will create.

Grundman is the Sacramento-based attorney and spokesman representing the Inland Empire Smart Growth Committee, comprised of residents from San Bernardino and Riverside counties who wish to remain anonymous and who are considering taking legal action, he said.

"We are reviewing the facts surrounding the development and its impact on residents in the area," Grundman said. "At this point, we believe that during the intervening eight years there have been both substantial changes and new information not known when the (environmental impact report) was completed that would warrant a supplemental or subsequent (report)."

The project runs south along the 210 Freeway and east of Base Line Road. The Upland City Council signed off on the development agreement by a 3-2 margin in February without major opposition from the public.

At that meeting, Councilman Gino Filippi raised his concerns with the timeliness of the report and the predicted flow of traffic on Base Line Road once the project is completed.

"Our attorney and staff felt, even though some time has passed, that the EIR document was adequate and valid," said Upland City Manager Rod Butler.

The shopping center is expected to be completed late next year and will feature 80,000 square feet of retail space. Because 2 1/2 acres are within Claremont, officials from that city have also been involved in planning discussions.

"The cities and developer have had a number of meetings with Caltrans over the last few months," Butler said. "They're moving forward with the first component where people see the major construction in the shopping center."

Butler said the city never received any correspondence from the committee when the agreement was approved.

Grundman said he was hired March 15, after the council approved the agreement.

On behalf of the committee, the attorney sent a letter March 22 to Caltrans' District 8 Director John Bulinski. In it, Grundman wrote the city should not rely on a 2008 report outlining the project's possible environmental impacts. Instead, Upland should have conducted a supplemental report to identify any new impacts and how to mitigate them, he said.

"In wanting to move this project forward, (Upland) violated the public trust as the lead agency, in passing the potential traffic impacts and due diligence to Caltrans," Grundman said in a statement.

He said he has not heard back from Caltrans.

Terri Kasinga, a spokeswoman for Caltrans District 8, said the division never received Grundman's letter. She added District 8 is no longer overseeing the project. Since the project includes Claremont and Los Angeles County, neighboring District 7 will be involved in the development. Officials with District 7 could not be reached for comment.

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URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/government-and-politics/20160517/residents-raise-opposition-to-sycamore-hills-development-in-upland>

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## San Bernardino policing changes lead to drop in violent crime, chief says

*By Doug Saunders, The Sun*

Wednesday, May 18, 2016

SAN BERNARDINO >> Police actions here combating recent crime seem to be working, said Police Chief Jarrod Burguan.

It's been a violent year in San Bernardino, one that Burguan wants to combat with increased police presence and community programs.

"Our goal is to raise the police presence and end this streak of violence," Burguan said. "But we need to look into new and innovative ways to change the cycle."

- [MAP: See the locations of all the homicides in San Bernardino in 2016](#)

After weeks of gun violence claimed several lives and wounded several others and reached a climax during a bloody 11-day span in April, when eight people were fatally shot, San Bernardino police launched Operation Safe Streets. So far this year, 26 people have been killed in San Bernardino, compared to 44 homicides in 2015 — including the 14 lives lost [Dec. 2 at the Inland Regional Center mass shooting](#).

Operation Safe Streets is a joint task force comprised of city police and deputies from the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department. The agencies are working together to combat street crimes with proactive enforcement, which has led to 29 guns taken off the streets, 52 felony arrests and 34 misdemeanor arrests since the inception of the program, according to Burguan.

Crime has been a top concern of many in San Bernardino in recent weeks.

After the shooting death of [25-year-old Bernard Chew](#) on April 25 — marking the 24th homicide victim in the city — Burguan called a town hall meeting, where he told attendees officers would be on "retaliation protocol," which required all days off to be canceled. The emergency staffing lasted one week, he said.

"The 'extra' shifts only went on about a week until the regularly scheduled OSS operations started," Burguan said last week. "I still have additional shifts, but they are all voluntary."

The department also has been getting help from three San Bernardino County sheriff's deputies and a corporal assigned to the police station to assist with proactive patrols and violence suppression.

"Our teams have been up and around the city of San Bernardino a lot," said Lt. Jon Billings, head of the Sheriff's Department's gang unit, during a recent San Bernardino Countywide Gang and Drugs Task Force [meeting](#).

The city paid for the loan of the deputies for 45 days, Burguan said. “It takes up a lot of funding to add services from another agency.”

Burguan didn’t reveal what was in the works to keep the violent crime rate down after the 45 days end.

Along with the four sheriff’s officials assigned to OSS, members of the multiagency San Bernardino Movement Against Street Hoodlums, or SMASH, took to city streets to target gang members and gang crimes specifically.

The increase in officers and deputies has led to a lull in violence. The city’s most recent homicide was [May 9, when 26-year-old Gilbert Rey was fatally shot](#) in the 1100 block of West Vine Street.

Even with the programs police have in place, residents in some neighborhoods are still fearful.

“I see all these police out here and was hoping they’re cracking down on these knuckleheads,” said resident Carlos Leon, who lives near 17th Street and Mountain View Avenue. “We hear shots all the time and that needs to stop. Can’t we live in peace without these thugs ruining our neighborhoods?”

Burguan believes there are ways to get that point across to people, but sometimes it doesn’t work.

“We talk about how to put things into the right place to impact folks,” Burguan said. “And somehow we still fail to reach certain people.”

According to Burguan, more than 75 percent of the violent crimes in the city are either gang- or drug-related, and often witnesses are reluctant to speak up.

Opportunities exist for young people to find a way out of their existing lifestyle, Burguan added.

“I’m not sure what the answer is to reach them all,” he said. “I’ll tell you this though, there is no shortage of efforts going on in this city to try to do just that.”

Stater Bros. Markets has donated money to fund a Police Activities League, Burguan said. PAL is a youth crime prevention program that focuses on educational, athletic and other recreational activities.

But police spokesman Lt. Rich Lawhead is not sure the program will ever happen.

“One of the setbacks of the PAL is trying to get officers to volunteer and continue with it,” Lawhead said. “Reality is nobody could blame an officer for wanting to spend his off-time with his family and with all of the added hours they’re working, I don’t know if this program will ever get off the ground.”

Burguan is also focusing on an intervention program known as Operation Ceasefire.

Operation Ceasefire is a problem-oriented policing initiative aimed at youth gun violence. The focus is placed on two elements — gun trafficking and gang violence.

Some residents who live in the city have faith in the system and the police to handle the spike in crime.

“I’ve lived here since 1968, and I’ve seen the crime rate fluctuate so many times,” resident Janet McCauley said. “This recent spike though is pretty brazen and in your face. I have faith that our boys in blue will get it under control. They always do.”

*Staff Writer Beatriz Valenzuela contributed to this story.*



# Here's the Most Dangerous City in California

BY DENNIS ROMERO

TUESDAY, MAY 17, 2016 AT 2:07 P.M.



File photo by [Chris Yarzab/Flickr](#)

When asked to name the most dangerous place for crime in California, Compton, L.A.'s Eastside or the East Bay might come to mind.

You'd be wrong.

The most dangerous city in the Golden State when it comes to crime, police presence and other "community factors" such as poverty, the high school graduation rate and comparatively low police budgets, is in the Inland Empire.

It's San Bernardino.

That, at least, is according to the Southern California law firm of [Graham Donath](#), which commissioned a report that crunches the numbers and gives us [a list of California's most dangerous cities](#).

San Bernardino, a Great Recession–embattled town that's in bankruptcy, doesn't have the highest crime rate. Oakland and Stockton are worse when it comes to serious, violent crimes (murder, rape, robbery and assault), the analysis found.

But when all the factors were calculated, including unemployment, police per capita and even the number of days in a year when the high temperature was higher than 80 degrees, San Bernardino is your winner, the Donath report says.

The city, for example, ranked in the top 10 for municipalities with the lowest investment in law enforcement. It also ranked in the top 10 for those "community factors" we talked about.

All across this great state there's a lot to be desired when it comes to fixing lawlessness, however.

The analysis notes that all of its top-10 cities had a poverty rate of nearly 15 percent (14.5) or greater. That includes Los Angeles, where about one in five people (21.2 percent) lives in poverty, according to the report.

San Bernardino's poverty rate is pegged at a whopping 30.6 percent.

The analysis cites the high cost of living as a possible pressure point for crime. We don't need to tell you that housing costs in L.A. are out of control.

"One explanation for high poverty levels in California cities could be the rising cost of living with stagnant wages," the report says. "The poverty has actually grown in the state since 2007, and this could be because the increased cost of living is sending people into debt. It's also encouraging people to leave or discouraging them from moving to the state."

Los Angeles, by the way, ranked 19th on the dangerous cities list.

Final	City ▲	Crime Rank (1 is	Police Rank (1 is	Community Rank (1 is
		Least Dangerous)	Least Investment)	Highest Risk Factors)



Rank ▲		Most Crime) ▲	▲	▲
1	San Bernardino	2	9	9
2	Stockton	3	40	2
3	Modesto	8	10	7
4	Vallejo	4	8	32
5	Salinas	10	3	11
6	Oakland	1	53	26
7	Antioch	6	4	34
8	Pomona	11	22	5
9	Victorville	14	1	16
10	Inglewood	9	54	12

Graham Donath

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San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

## Study: Inland Empire ranks high in income equality

By Tom Sheridan, *The Press-Enterprise*

Tuesday, May 17, 2016



A study by the [National Urban League](#) shows the Riverside, San Bernardino and Ontario metropolitan area ranks at or near the top nationally in income equality for African-Americans and Latinos.

But just because people of color in the area earn wages closer to whites than anywhere else in the country doesn't mean the economic picture is all that rosy for them, according to one of the region's top economists.

Chris Thornberg, director of the UC Riverside Center for Economic Forecasting, concedes those do appear to be good numbers on the surface, but there are caveats.

Among them are the relatively low percentage of African-Americans in the region — less than 8 percent — and the struggles that both African-Americans and Latinos continue to face in accessing educational resources.

“If you add it all up, you end with a situation in the Inland Empire where there's a higher preponderance of low-skilled whites,” said Thornberg. “Maybe things look a little bit more equal, but it may be a demographic issue more than anything else.”

The “[State of Black America](#)” report has been produced annually since 1976 by the National Urban League. For the third year in a row, the Ontario-Riverside-San Bernardino area ranked first in the nation in income equality for African-Americans. It also ranked No. 2 in Latino income equality this year, up from No. 8 in 2015.

According to the 2016 report, in Ontario-Riverside-San Bernardino the average income is \$46,438 for African-Americans, \$48,790 for Latinos and \$60,668 for whites.

Cal State San Bernardino professor of sociology Mary Texeira has been on the faculty for over 20 years, and has kept up with the National Urban League's annual report during that time.

Like Thornberg, she seeks the kind of contextual data that would support the apparent good news from the income equality metric. Texeira has a hard time finding it.

“I haven't seen nor heard of any kind of numbers that would reflect that African-Americans and Latinos are doing better economically,” said Texeira. “Because, as the Urban League report says, everything

comes from economics. So you would expect to see, for instance, higher graduation rates. You would expect to see lower crime rates. You would expect to see gang activity getting lower. But we don't see all of that stuff.

“If in fact, African-Americans and Latinos are doing better, what is the effect of that?”

Vincent McCoy, director of the Inland Valley Small Business Development Center, believes part of the equation in the promising minority income statistics could be the local access to government jobs for people of color.

“We do have a high population of government employees in this region,” said McCoy.

The sources of those jobs include the Riverside and San Bernardino county governments, school districts, community colleges and March Air Reserve Base.

Another factor, said McCoy, could be a pattern of Cal State San Bernardino students sticking around after picking up their diplomas.

“A high percentage of their graduates remain in the area,” said McCoy. “So they go there, they get their degree and they stay in the area. Employment’s going to be a little bit higher and it’s based on their educational attainment.”

The report also examined inequities in education and justice for African-Americans and Latinos. Data was collected from the Census Bureau, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the National Center for Education Statistics and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Pastor James Baylark has worked in the region for years as the president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference of Riverside County and the spiritual leader of Good Hope Missionary Baptist Church in Perris.

“I would say that there has been progress,” said Baylark. “Progress has been made in terms of employment opportunities, in terms of salary increases over the years in the Inland Empire.”

Baylark said that those gains are relative, though.

“When I look at the economy of San Bernardino and Riverside counties combined and compare it with corporate America in Orange County and L.A. County — it’s a whole different ballgame,” said Baylark.

The report shows the Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim area No. 47 nationwide for African-Americans and No. 53 for Latinos in terms of income equality.

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URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/social-affairs/20160517/study-inland-empire-ranks-high-in-income-equality>

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LOCAL / L.A. Now

# 7 former top officials of Beaumont charged with corruption

By **Veronica Rocha**

MAY 17, 2016, 2:31 PM

**S**even former officials of the city of Beaumont have been named in a corruption case that includes charges of embezzlement and misappropriating of funds, according to Riverside County Superior Court records.

In court documents filed Tuesday, the Riverside County district attorney has filed charges against former City Manager Alan Kapanicas, former Economic Development Director David William Dillon, former Public Works Director Deepak Moorjani, former Planning Director Ernest Alois Egger, former Finance Director William Kevin Aylward, former City Atty. Joseph Sandy Aklufi and former Beaumont Police Chief Francis Dennis Coe Jr.

Riverside County Dist. Atty. Mike Hestrin will announce the charges in the corruption case at 3 p.m. Tuesday in Riverside.

Beaumont, about 80 miles east of Los Angeles, was at [the center of a public corruption probe in April 2015](#) when investigators with the district attorney's office and [FBI](#) agents raided City Hall. They hauled away dozens of boxes of records, computers and other items.

Investigators also searched the home of City Manager Alan Kapanicas in Palm Desert and a site in Temecula.

At the time, sources familiar with the investigation said the raid was part of an ongoing investigation of the municipality's business relationship and contracts with Urban Logic Consultants Group, a Beaumont firm whose offices were also searched by investigators, officials said in a statement.

No arrests were made during the search.

Urban Logic has provided planning, engineering and economic development services to Beaumont, a city of roughly 40,000 residents, for the last two decades.

At the time, attorney Bill Nassar, who was representing Urban Logic President Kieran McKiernan, said FBI officials wanted documents and computers from before his client purchased the company in September 2012.

McKiernan inherited the firm's city contracts as part of purchasing the company, but none of the firm's former directors were current Urban Logic employees, Nassar said.

In 2010, several former directors of Urban Logic sued a Beaumont citizens group for defamation and trade libel. The lawsuit was rejected, and in an appellate court ruling affirming the lawsuit's dismissal, a judicial panel noted that three of Urban Logic's then-principals — Deepak Moorjani, Ernest Egger and Dave Dillon — had held top posts at Beaumont City Hall until August 2009.

Moorjani has previously stated that the FBI, the city and the company had investigated allegations of misconduct and no wrongdoing had been found, according to the appellate ruling.

In May 2014, an Orange County Superior Court judge issued a ruling that Beaumont failed to contribute to regional transportation projects for nearly a decade and owes more than \$42 million plus interest to a regional transit fund.

The state controller's office audited the city after finding "significant differences between the city's financial transaction reports to the controller's office and its audited financial statements over two fiscal years." Auditors found the city's accounting controls had "widespread deficiencies that rendered them effectively nonexistent."

"These kinds of deficiencies are of great concern, especially to the citizens of Beaumont, who rightly expect their city government to safeguard their tax dollars," Controller Betty T. Yee said. "However, I am encouraged that city leaders now recognize the need to implement major improvements."

The controller's office [findings were listed as follows](#):

- The city failed to properly account for bond transactions by three of its units, including financing and utility authorities and a community facilities district that together issued \$626 million in bonds. As a result, the controller's team could not determine whether the bond proceeds were used for the intended purposes.
- The former city manager and former public works director, both principals of outside consultants that provided city staff, received fees from bond proceeds for their services. In the absence of any written agreements, it was unclear whether these services were separate from their responsibilities as city officials. These two officials approved payments to the consulting companies where they were principals, creating conflicts of interest.
- In 2008, Beaumont obtained a reseller's permit from the State Board of Equalization, allowing it to purchase items outside the city without paying sales tax, even though the city did not appear to be in the business of selling goods. Beaumont also allowed one of its vendors to use the permit. The arrangement allowed the city to shift sales tax revenue from other jurisdictions by moving the

supposed point of sale within its boundaries.

- The city did not consistently follow its competitive bidding laws. City staff bought equipment or issued contracts for public works without competitive bidding, arguing that the vendor was the only source, yet failed to provide documents supporting this claim. In 2013, the city entered into a no-bid contract with Urban Logic Consultants that allowed engineering projects to be approved through “job cards” rather than open, competitive bidding.
- The city lacked receipts and descriptions for credit card purchases, supporting documentation for loans made to employees, and sufficient records for a loan to a private business. Invoices were missing, including purchases from a construction company totaling more than \$1 million.
- For five years in a row, the city ended the fiscal year with material deficits of as much as \$10 million in its general fund. It did not have sufficient revenue to fund existing levels of service. The city said it would cover these deficits with \$21.5 million owed by its redevelopment agency. However, the redevelopment agency has been dissolved and it is highly uncertain that amount can be collected.
- Beaumont failed to do timely bank reconciliations and did not segregate staff duties.

**For breaking news in California, follow [VeronicaRochaLA](#) on Twitter.**

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**This article is related to:** [FBI](#)





## BEAUMONT: Following the bond money trail and residents react to indictments

[FROM STAFF REPORTS](#)

2016-05-18 22:40:25



On Tuesday, May 17, the Riverside County District Attorney's Office [charged seven former officials with the city of Beaumont with 94 felonies and misappropriation of \\$43 million in taxpayer funds.](#)

Public records show [how Beaumont city officials tapped into millions in bond money.](#)

The more bond debt the city incurred, the more money the men made, according to public records.

Former City Manager Alan C. Kapanicas, who also served as executive director of the entity the city created to take bonds, [repeatedly approved payments to his own company, General Government Management Services, city records show.](#) (After he left Beaumont, ex-council members, and the indicted former police chief, [aided his job search.](#))

Meanwhile, Ernest A. Egger; David W. Dillon and Deepak Moorjani served respectively as the city planning, economic development and public works directors as well as being the principals behind [Urban Logic Consultants, the firm that was originally hired to help with financial and infrastructure planning.](#) At least \$43.2 million went to Urban Logic between 1994 and 2012.

[Court documents outline how investigators believe some of the seven defendants](#) set up a system that kept their deals and millions of dollars in alleged illicit money diversions out of the public eye.

And yes, the [city's handbook warns against conflicts of interest.](#)

Around Beaumont on Wednesday, [residents talked about the alleged corruption.](#) There were some [mixed emotions in the city.](#)

But [activist Judy Bingham was lauded for bringing attention](#) to what was going on in Beaumont.

However, Tuesday's charges don't close the book on [ongoing probes and legal woes in Beaumont:](#)

- The city is appealing a suit that could cost them [\\$60 million because of unpaid regional transportation fees.](#)
- The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission served the city with subpoenas on April 22, [which the city released on Wednesday.](#)
- The [State Controller's office reviewed the city's finances](#) and said the accounting controls didn't exist.
- In the wake of the State Controller's report, [Beaumont also sought for the California Attorney General to investigate Union Bank's role as trustee](#) in the sale of \$200 million in bonds.

Beaumont Mayor Mike Lara released a statement about the city's commitment to [transparency and accountability](#) and also named steps it was taking to meet that commitment.

While the work of DA investigators led to 94 felony charges in the Beaumont case, a two-year [political corruption probe of Moreno Valley ended with no indictments](#).

What's next in the case? [Four of the seven defendants](#) will be arraigned in Riverside County Superior Court on Thursday.

Here's the [current legal status of each of the defendants](#), who is still in jail, who bailed out, who's in court Thursday and who's assets the DA's office is trying to freeze.

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Take a look at these other links for more information on the Beaumont corruption probe.

[Learn more about the key players in corruption case](#)

[Seven former city employees charged with corruption](#)

[Complete coverage of Beaumont probe](#)

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## BEAUMONT: How city officials tapped millions in bond funds

By [DAVID DANIELSKI](#)

2016-05-18 19:56:45



More than two decades ago, a handful of consultants devised a strategy to revitalize the small Riverside County city of Beaumont by encumbering future residents with bond debt.

Working as consulting city administrators, they created a special tax district that nearly encompassed the entire city. In the years that followed, with the blessing of the City Council, they went to the bond market more than 30 times to borrow more than \$300 million, ostensibly for public projects.

City officials trumpeted the strategy as a responsible way to keep up with growth. New and improved roads, waterworks, parks and other amenities were in place before moving vans arrived as the city's population quickly quadrupled to more than 40,000 people.

But the flaws in that strategy became apparent this week when the men landed in jail, charged with multiple felony counts of embezzlement, conflicts of interest, and misappropriation of public funds.

As they issued the bonds, the men also directed portions of the money to companies they created shortly after they began working for Beaumont.

The more bond debt the city incurred, the more money the men made, public records show.

See a bigger version of the graphic [here](#).

# Conflict of interest?



### Public interest

- City manager
- Executive Director of Beaumont Finances
- Makes recommendations to



### Private interest

- Co-owner of General Government Management Services
- Company receives

## Recommendations to the City Council

- Approves bond expenses

**Alan Kapanicas**

at least \$1.2 million in Beaumont bond funds for consulting work



**Ernest A. Egger**



**David W. Dillon**



**Deepak Moorjani**



### Public interest

- They serve respectively as the city planning, economic development and public works directors
- Make recommendations to the City Council
- Oversee city public works projects
- Approves bond expenditures



### Private interest

- Co-owners of Urban Logic Consultants
- Company receives at least \$43.2 million in bond funds for planning and engineering work associated with public works projects in the city

## STAFF GRAPHIC

The man in control of the bond funds was former City Manager Alan C. Kapanicas, who also served as executive director of the entity the city created to take bonds, city records show.

General Government Management Services, a company created and owned by Kapanicas and his wife, Diana, billed the bond funds for at least \$1.2 million between 1996 and 2009, according to a review of more than 3,000 bond-fund withdraw requests.

Kapanicas, acting as a city official, repeatedly approved payments to his own company, city records show. Checks would be sent from Union Bank, the bond trustee, to homes the couple owned in either Murrieta or Rancho Mirage – also listed as the addresses for their company.

Much larger sums – at least \$43.2 million – went to Urban Logic Consultants between 1994 and 2012. The principals of Urban Logic, Ernest A. Egger; David W. Dillon and Deepak Moorjani, served respectively as the city planning, economic development and public works directors.

Moorjani, acting as public works director, signed off on payments to Urban Logic from bond construction funds for engineering work, the records show. Money then would be wired to the Urban Logic account at Union Bank.

In court papers publicly released Wednesday, Riverside County district Attorney senior investigator Michael Gavin said Dillon and Egger also signed off on bond payments to their company.

William K. Aylward, the city's former finance director and a certified public accountant, received more than \$160,000 in bond funds when he served as contract-account manager between 2000 and 2008, city records show.

The bond-spending records, released in dribbles by the city since last summer, did not provide a complete picture of bond spending but did show how bond funds became a lucrative and consistent source of revenue for these former city officials, who are among seven defendants charged Tuesday in the District Attorney's sweeping Beaumont corruption probe.

Other major bond-fund earners were the city's long time financial consultant, Ron Gunn, who had offices in Huntington Beach, but whose last mailing address was a post office box in the Puget Sound community of Olalla near Seattle. He received fees totaling at least \$2.2 million.

And Beaumont's bond attorneys, the Laguna Hills law firm of McFarlin & Anderson, made at least \$2.8 million.

Gunn and the bond attorneys have not been accused of any wrongdoing or charged with any crimes.

The city's bond transactions remain the subject of a formal investigation by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, which polices the nation's stock and bond markets. On April 22, the commission served subpoenas at Beaumont City Hall.

Beaumont released the subpoenas to the public on Wednesday, May 18.

Kapanicas, contacted by telephone in late April, declined to comment on the bond spending.

Moorjani, the former public works director, did not return a message left last week with a family member. Bond attorneys George W. McFarlin and James F. Anderson did not respond to a message left with a receptionist at their offices.

Egger, Dillon, Alyward, and Gunn did not return telephone voice-mail messages.

Roger Berg, who served on the City Council between 1993 and 2014, defended Kapanicas and the Urban Logic officials in an interview last week.

The men, Berg said, simply followed a debt-financing plan approved by the City Council that was needed to accommodate explosive growth and modernized what had been the city's crumbling roads, and water-delivery and sewage systems.

And the plan worked, he said. Beaumont grew responsibility and now has a larger tax base.

Berg acknowledged that Kapanicas and Urban Logic officials advised the City Council about when to issue bonds and how much should be borrowed, knowing that their companies would later earn fees from the bond proceeds.

Berg compared the situation to getting advice from an attorney about whether to pursue a lawsuit, knowing that

the lawyer stood to make more money later by litigating the lawsuit.

"They made money," Berg said of the bond work. "But they worked hard for it. They earned it."

He said using consultants as Beaumont city administrators was part of a larger effort to run the city like a business, which cut the city's personnel costs and prevented employee layoffs during hard economic times.

Contacted on Wednesday, a day after the charges were filed, Berg said that the district attorney may have information that was never shared with him.

## BIG IDEA

Kapanicas' hourly work started in 1993 when he was an employee of BSI Consultants, then based in San Diego, and he first served as a consulting administrative director for Beaumont. He was named city manager in 1995, the same year he formed General Government Management Services.

Around the same time, Dave Dillon and Ernest A. Egger formed Urban Logic as they led an ambitious effort to revitalize the city by imposing special taxes called Mello-Roos assessments on the city's future residents. Those taxes allowed them to issue dozens of bonds, putting residents on the hook for hundreds of millions of dollars in debt.

Mello-Roos financing is typically used to pay for streets, sidewalks and other public works within a particular development. And bond debt payments are covered by assessments on houses in the development.

But Beaumont took Mello-Roos financing to unprecedented levels.

"We put together a citywide community facilities district with a massive bonded indebtedness structure, so that we could address the needs of the city as the city developed," Dillon said when testifying in 2014 in a lawsuit brought by the Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG).

(In its suit, the agency successfully argued that Beaumont failed to pay its fair share of regional transportation fees and won a \$53 million judgment against the city. The case is under appeal.)

Creating a citywide district had never been done before, both Dillon and Kapanicas acknowledged in court.

Kapanicas said his municipal expertise allowed him to determine a "fair share" each property owner should pay in further property taxes to pay off the bonds.

"That's the reason I had come to the city," Kapanicas said under oath. "They needed a tax guy."

They then ran up the bond-fund credit line.

Between 1993 and 2014, they issued debt on the bond market at least 32 times, creating business opportunities for their companies.

Calculations by Kapanicas' company of much future home owners would have to pay in special taxes were included in at least 21 voluminous official statements that went to prospective bond investors. His company stopped getting bond funds in 2011 when he became a city employee and was no longer a consulting city manager paid through his company.

But Urban Logic continued to make bond money preparing engineering reports that were needed before bonds could be issued.

Hundreds of thousands of dollars in fees were paid each time the city took on more debt.

Consider a 2003 bond issuance for \$21.4 million.

The bonds were set up to include "expense" and "cost of issuance" funds that totaled \$960,000 that would be divided up by attorneys, consultants and other professionals shortly after bonds were sold to investors.

Records show that Kapanicas' company received \$100,000 for "special tax" services for the four improvement areas. This was on top of the compensation he received as city manager.

Urban Logic, meanwhile, received \$145,000 for “formation costs” and “engineering.”

Gunn, the financial advisor, made the most money. His fees were \$171,525 for “consulting service,” which included \$6,000 for his expenses, city records show. And the bond attorneys, McFarlin & Anderson, got \$156,050.

Four years later, Gunn received another \$192,987 and the bond attorneys received \$16,320 when the 2003 bonds were refinanced. And Kapanicas’ company was paid \$14,900 for special tax consulting work.

Once the bonds were issued, Kapanicas’ company also billed the bond fund for financial services, tracking bond-fund interest, performing disclosure duties and other financial services.

Meanwhile, Urban Logic, was paid millions of dollars from bond construction funds, to be compensated for engineering work throughout the city.

Rick Teichert, a former treasurer for Moreno Valley, who also served as the top finance officer for the Orange County Transportation Authority and the Sacramento Public Library Authority, said issuing many relatively small bonds meant more bond money went to consulting fees and less to the public projects.

Many Beaumont bonds ranged from \$1.7 million to \$22.8 million.

Teichert also said that most bond issues don’t have a special tax consultant, the role played by Kapanicas. Tax calculations are normally done by engineering firms or bond attorneys, he said.

He added it was unusual for the same professionals to issue debt over a period of two decades. It’s more prudent to periodically open such work to competitive proposals to keep costs down.

In documents filed Wednesday in Riverside County Superior Court Riverside County District Attorney’s Office senior investigator Michael Gavin said the corruption case defendants created their own consultancy company and controlled payments to that firm without city oversight.

Gavin noted the unusual scope of Beaumont’s community facilities district, which “encompasses nearly the entire city and has an approval for \$655 million of bonded indebtedness to build out the entirety of Beaumont.”

Gavin said the defendants worked out a way to keep the City Council from overseeing payments coming out of the bond accounts.

The Urban Logic “principals signed off on payments to their own company,” he said.

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## EDITORIAL: Beaumont betrayed by its leaders

2016-05-18 16:00:43

It finally happened. More than a year after law enforcement raids were conducted at Beaumont City Hall, the offices of city consultant Urban Logic and the home of longtime City Manager Alan Kapanicas, corruption charges have been filed against seven former Beaumont city officials.

Riverside County District Attorney Mike Hestrin announced charges Tuesday against Mr. Kapanicas, former finance director William Aylward, former economic development director David Dillon, former public works director Deepak Moorjani, former planning director Ernest Egger, former city attorney Joseph Aklufi and former police chief Francis Coe.

“Public servants must remember a basic truth: They serve the people, and the money handled by the city and any government is the people’s money and should be handled as such,” Mr. Hestrin said Tuesday.

The defendants face charges including conspiracy, embezzlement and conflict of interest. According to Mr. Hestrin, they were involved in the misappropriation of \$43 million in taxpayer money from the city of roughly 42,000 people.

While the defendants certainly deserve their days in court, it has become clear that those charged were involved in mismanaging one of the most dysfunctional governments in the Inland Empire.

In November, the state Controller’s Office released an audit of Beaumont’s finances, finding a “total lack of accounting for, and questionable use of, bond proceeds.” Shoddy recordkeeping and incomplete spreadsheets made it difficult for city and state officials to fully explain where public monies have been going for decades.

Noting that the former finance director, city manager and public works director were personally benefiting financially from municipal bond proceeds, the Controller’s Office concluded at the least that “the city management and the City Council failed to exercise its fiduciary responsibilities in protecting taxpayer dollars.”

Additionally, Beaumont officials the past year have essentially had to completely rebuild the city’s budgeting and accounting processes. Basic pieces of information, like how much money the city actually had, needed to be reevaluated, and budgeting around hard numbers is evidently something new to the city.

It is unfortunate that such abuses and misuses of power had been allowed to persist for so long. Communities around the region need take note of what their own governments are up to and hold them accountable. For the residents, businesses and taxpayers of Beaumont, we hope the city continues the hard work of cleaning up the mistakes of the past and serves the public honorably and responsibly.

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LOCAL / L.A. Now

# Lawmakers consider a last-minute effort to make child death files secret



Gabriel Fernandez was killed after breakdowns by Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services. (Family handout)

By **Garrett Therolf**

MAY 18, 2016, 7:09 PM

**G**ov. Jerry Brown's administration has quietly drafted a bill that would gut key portions of the state's landmark law requiring child protective services agencies to release records when a youth dies of abuse or neglect. A vote is expected within the next week.

It is the second time in two years that California Department of Social Services Director Will Lightbourne has introduced the bill on an emergency basis through a "trailer bill," introduced as part of the state's May budgeting process. That approach bypasses the usual committee review and fast-tracks the proposal for a vote.

Since the state implemented the law to increase transparency in 2008, reporters have accessed social worker case notes and other files that revealed inadequacies in the state's child welfare system, including

instances of social workers disregarding policies and allowing children to remain in conditions that proved fatal.

In response to news stories based on those reports, state and county officials implemented a battery of child protection reforms that child welfare advocates credit with reducing the number of children who die because of abuse and neglect.

“

**This is an item that has ...impassioned support and heated opposition. Clearly, it is not cooked enough.**

— Sen. Holly Mitchell (D-Los Angeles)

Earlier this year, Los Angeles County prosecutors filed criminal charges against four social workers who handled the case of 8-year-old Gabriel Fernandez in the months before he was tortured and killed. The case was first reported in The Times based on information that included documents released through the disclosure law.

The social workers union has staged protests against the criminal charges and worked with the administration to craft the bill that would reduce public scrutiny of the case files for child fatalities. The state child welfare directors association also supports the administration's bill.

The bill currently under consideration would relax deadlines for the release of records and keep the names of social workers secret. It would deny the public access to original case notes, instead providing abbreviated summaries of how the government attempted to protect vulnerable children.

The family's full history with child protective services would also be reduced, and new restrictions would be put in place to remove information provided by witnesses.

State officials said the provisions were necessary to protect surviving children and adults who were not responsible for the abuse, but department spokesman Michael Weston said he was not aware of any cases in which the current procedure had harmed anyone.

Weston released a survey of other states' policies on abused or neglected children's deaths that showed most of the reviewed states release full records instead of summaries.

Lightbourne said that members of the public who are unhappy with the information released under the law can file court petitions for more records, but such petitions can take years in Los Angeles County



because of court backlogs.

Lightbourne said that he was proposing the changes to comply with federal requirements to update guidelines.

Bill Grimm, a senior attorney at the National Center for Youth Law who also lobbied for passage of the original law, testified at a hearing on Wednesday, saying: “We agree with the department that a change in law is needed ... but this bill is not that law.”

Sen. [Holly Mitchell](#) (D-Los Angeles), who chaired the hearing, pledged further deliberations before a decision.

“This is an item that has ... impassioned support and heated opposition,” she said. “Clearly, it is not cooked enough.”

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**This article is related to:** [Holly J. Mitchell](#)

LOCAL / L.A. Now

# Racist attacks against L.A.'s black City Council president prompt arrest, outrage

By **Matt Hamilton, Emily Alpert Reyes and David Zahniser**

MAY 19, 2016, 11:10 AM

**A**n outspoken critic of the [Los Angeles City Council](#) has been arrested after police say he submitted a public-comment card that depicted a burning cross, a body dangling from a tree and an apparent Ku Klux Klan figure holding a sign labeling Council President [Herb Wesson](#) with a racially charged epithet.

Wayne Spindler, an Encino-based attorney, was taken into custody Friday and booked on a felony count of making a criminal threat, said Officer Jane Kim of the [Los Angeles Police Department](#).

Spindler, 46, was released after posting \$75,000 bond and is scheduled to appear in court on June 10, according to online jail records. He did not return a message seeking comment.

On Thursday, a visibly angry Wesson denounced the messages on the comment card — as well as various other inflammatory statements made in recent months by members of the public.

Wesson, saying he is determined to protect the safety of his family, the city's workforce and residents who visit City Hall, pointed to such tragedies as the 1999 Columbine school massacre, the 2011 shooting of U.S. Rep. Gabby Giffords and the killing of nine people at a black church in South Carolina last year.

"The individuals that committed these crimes, they didn't have long criminal records. They didn't have a history of violence. They just snapped," Wesson said. "And when the law enforcement agencies investigate these crimes, they always find telltale signs of some hint, some clue that these individuals had some behavioral problems.

"If we would have picked up on those behavioral problems earlier, there might be a lot of people still alive today," he added.

Investigators with the LAPD's Threat Management Unit reviewed the comment card that was submitted to Wesson during the May 11 meeting of the Rules, Elections, Intergovernmental Relations and Neighborhoods Committee, Kim confirmed. Wesson is chairman of the committee.

Police determined that the actions shown in the drawing on the card warranted taking Spindler into custody, Kim said.

The L.A. County district attorney's office confirmed Thursday that prosecutors are reviewing the case against Spindler and evaluating whether to file charges, according to Jane Robison, spokeswoman for the office.

The card, which shows it was submitted by "Wayne from Encino," was scanned and published online with other public comment cards from the meeting. In blue marker, the card depicts a Ku Klux Klan figure holding a sign that states, "Herb = [n-word]." The KKK figure also appears to be holding a noose.

Next to the KKK figure is an image of a body apparently dangling from a tree by a noose, evocative of the lynching of blacks in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Wesson, the first African American to serve as the City Council president, directly addressed the contents of the comment card near the end of the committee meeting, which was held in Van Nuys. Spindler had testified multiple times before council members that day.

"He calls me the N-word and has [an image] of me hanging from a tree," Wesson told the audience. "So I just want to go on record to make sure that the city attorney's office knows that this idiot has done what he's done. Not man enough to say that to come up to my face and say something like that."

When Spindler began to respond from the audience, Wesson instructed the sergeants to "show him the way out," according to audio of the meeting.

"You get out. You get out," Wesson said. "Nobody's threatening you. You just need to treat people respectfully, and you don't know how to do that."

Spindler, who sometimes refers to himself as "Wayne from Encino," has had a long history of outrageous behavior during council meetings, Councilman [Paul Koretz](#) said. But the use of a stick-figure drawing of a lynching on a speaker card, combined with a racial slur, took things into new territory, Koretz added.

"It's offensive enough that this guy wears Ku Klux Klan hoods with large swastikas drawn on them and will stand in the aisle and do a Sieg Heil and a salute," said Koretz, the son of a Holocaust survivor. "But this is reaching a point where one wonders if he isn't a real danger."

Councilman Marqueece Harris-Dawson, one of three African American members of the council, said the drawing of the noose was unprecedented and a "direct communication of an act of violence."

The councilman, who represents parts of South L.A., said that for his own safety he tries to never be alone in City Hall. He has advised his staff members not to take the stairwells alone, he added.

"You turn a corner and one of these guys is standing there. You don't know what you're going to

get,” Harris-Dawson said.

Two years ago, the City Council agreed to pay \$215,000 to settle a free-speech lawsuit filed by a Venice resident who said city leaders had violated his constitutional rights by ejecting him from a commission meeting. Michael Hunt, who is black, had worn a Ku Klux Klan hood and a T-shirt featuring a profanity and a racial slur used to describe African Americans.

In the wake of that settlement, a handful of speakers increasingly rely on coarse language — sometimes racially offensive, other times sexually explicit — while testifying before council members.

Spindler frequently uses the F-word. Another speaker references a derogatory description of immigrant workers during each of her council appearances. A third has yelled an anti-gay slur from the speaker’s podium.

City Councilwoman [Nury Martinez](#), the only woman on the council, said she respects the right to free speech but has been frustrated by the racist, sexist and profane language that is frequently spewed during public comment. She said she was especially troubled by the rants that followed a recent City Hall presentation about sexual violence.

“It’s not constructive. They’re not disagreeing with items on the agenda,” Martinez said. “All you’re doing is offending.”

Spindler also routinely attends Los Angeles Police Commission meetings. At the police commission, he sometimes wears a white hood and delivers charged remarks.

At the L.A. County Board of Supervisors weekly meetings, Spindler has signed up as “Adolf Hitler” and has on at least one occasion called Supervisor [Mark Ridley-Thomas](#) an “Uncle Tom” during public comments.

In the wake of last week’s incident, Wesson promised to engage a broader citywide dialogue on tolerance. He also promised to keep the spotlight on racist, sexist and anti-gay slurs that have been made in recent months during council meetings.

“That is not our America. That is not the country that we have fought to build,” Wesson said. “And I will not stand idly by and allow these types of things to occur without engaging in a conversation.”

*Times staff writers Kate Mather and Abby Sewell contributed to this report.*

## ALSO

### [Key construction deadline for California bullet train pushed back four years](#)

## The dark side of trendy food trucks: A poor health safety record

### Southern California Gas Co. fined \$2.25 million for pipeline safety violations

For more California news, follow me [@MattHjourn](#). E-mail me at [matt.hamilton@latimes.com](mailto:matt.hamilton@latimes.com).

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#### UPDATES:

**11:10 a.m.:** This article has been updated with comments from Wesson at the news conference.

**May 19, 9:45 a.m.:** This article has been updated with a statement from the district attorney's office.

**7:50 a.m.:** This article has been updated to note that Wesson plans to address the attacks Thursday.

*This article was originally published at 9:32 p.m. May 18.*

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**This article is related to:** [Crime](#), [Herb Wesson](#), [Racism](#), [Los Angeles City Council](#), [Paul Koretz](#), [Los Angeles Police Department](#), [Nury Martinez](#)

San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

## California water board adopts regulations easing up on hard conservation targets

*By Steve Scauzillo, San Gabriel Valley Tribune*

Wednesday, May 18, 2016



The State Water Resources Control Board approved an eight-month drought emergency plan on Wednesday that scraps previous targets and allows urban water suppliers to set their own water conservation goals.

Instead of the hard targets in place for the past year that require up to 36 percent cutbacks, the new regulation allows the 411 urban water suppliers greater flexibility to conserve, taking into account vast regional differences in water supplies. The new rules will also require less than the [previous, statewide 25 percent conservation goal](#) that Californians failed to reach in

February, missing that number by just 1 percent.

Near-capacity reservoirs in Northern California and a healthy snowpack have eased the emergency in the state, water officials said. However, while the northern half of the state is no longer in drought mode, the central and southern regions remain dry due to uneven winter rainfall. The board will still press urban water users to continue conserving but with a softer approach.

“It is a question of how do we use this short reprieve,” said Felicia Marcus, chair of the state water board. “We have the ability to come back if it doesn’t work.”

Despite voting for the new rules, Marcus was not the only board member uneasy with the changes she characterized as “a different approach.”

In a rare move, board member Tam Doduc, a licensed civil engineer, abstained from the vote, saying the lack of specific conservation targets was inappropriate for an emergency regulation.

“We are still trying to recover from years of drought and are still looking at below normal or a dry year,” she said. “It doesn’t seem to be the time to send a message that there is no real urgent need to conserve at all.”

Each urban water supplier will be asked to take a stress test — similar to what banks are required to do under the Dodd-Frank Act — and prove they are able to withstand another three years of drought. For example, if an agency foresees a supply shortage of 10 percent, it will be assigned a mandatory conservation standard of 10 percent, according to Max Gomberg, the board’s climate and conservation manager.

Gomberg said many parts of the state are still experiencing the drought’s effects, including barren wells and tinder dry forests more susceptible to wildfires.



“We are not out of the woods yet,” he said. “We have some continuing challenges. [Current climate predictions are for a dry winter](#). It is a good reason for continued caution.”

Most water agencies testified in support of the new regulation, including the Association of California Water Agencies, which represents 430 public agencies.

Some communities, such as those in Humboldt County in Northern California, say they have abundant surface water and welcome the new approach. But some water managers and conservation groups in Southern California say removing stiff targets and replacing them with self-reporting may send the wrong message.

“By taking the hard limits out, it lends to the public perception that the drought is over,” said Adan Ortega, executive director of the California Association of Mutual Water Cos. “It also introduces ambiguity into the equation.”

For example, groundwater resources relied upon by cities in the Inland Empire and San Gabriel Valley have not been restored due to below-average rainfall in Southern California for the fifth straight year.

“The San Gabriel Valley is far from out of the woods,” Ortega said.

State water managers said California has been withdrawing too often from groundwater during the past four years.

“We often talk about groundwater as the savings account for the state. When we deplete that in severe drought it is tough to build it back up,” Gomberg said.

The new regulations would continue the [ban on various water-wasting practices](#), such as carwashing without a hose nozzle; watering down sidewalks or driveways; irrigation runoff over curbs and into gutters and outdoor watering within 48 hours of a measurable rainfall.

The regulations go into effect June 1 and run through January, state water officials said.

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URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/environment-and-nature/20160518/california-water-board-adopts-regulations-easing-up-on-hard-conservation-targets>

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# California Relaxes Water Restrictions For This Summer



A sign posted along San Francisco's Marina Green, a 74-acre expanse of grass between Fort Mason and the Presidio. (*Lindsey Hoshaw/KQED*)

On Wednesday California revised its drought rules, ending a year of local conservation quotas handed down by the state.

The State Water Resources Control Board voted to abandon its formula — decried by some local agencies as a “one-size-fits-all” model — which [required each water district to curb water use](#) by a certain state-mandated percentage and instead, let districts determine how much they should save.

Some see the switch as premature.

“I think it’s really important that we make sure to convey a consistent message that we are still in an emergency drought situation,” said Tracy Quinn, a senior policy analyst with the Natural Resources Defense Council. Quinn and a handful of others argued against the change at Wednesday’s State Water

Board hearing in Sacramento. Nearly [two-thirds of the state](#) is still classified by federal climatologists as being in “severe drought.”

But board chair Felicia Marcus says the state is not giving up its oversight role.

“We also get to watch,” Marcus told KQED. “It’s kind of a trust-but-verify situation that I think is worth considering.”

It won’t be a free-for-all. Under the new system, local suppliers need to apply prescribed hypothetical “stress tests.” Their savings targets will then be based on anticipated water shortfalls over the next three years — assuming the next three mimic the last three in terms of water demand and drought conditions.

“We’re making a shift that recognizes the supply conditions have improved,” said the water board’s Max Gomberg. “We’re setting up something that is going to be in place, really, for the future.”

The board says it’s partially reacting to more than [150 comments](#) it received. In a last-minute reversal, the board did decide to keep the ban on restaurants serving water unless customers ask for it.

### **Top-Down System Saved Water**

As much as local water officials resisted them, the emergency system of state-imposed quotas [largely worked](#).

Over Governor Jerry Brown’s declared nine-month drought emergency, from June 2015 to February 2016, urban consumers saved 1.19 million acre-feet of water, compared to 2013. That’s enough to supply nearly 6 million people for a year, and fell just short of the governor’s 25 percent goal.

Among the state’s 411 largest water districts, 199 or just under half, met or exceeded their cumulative goals.

Standouts included Cambria Community Services District, Menlo Park, Dublin San Ramon Services, Soquel Creek Water District and Santa Barbara — each saved 20 percent more water than state regulators required.

There were also stories of redemption among local utilities that initially fell short, but eventually saved more than required.

The ways in which they turned things around are widely disparate and relied on a combination of deliberate tactics and good fortune.

In the agricultural communities served by the Rainbow Municipal Water District in San Diego County, many farmers switched from growing avocados to less water-intensive grapes. They also got lucky. San Diego County saw baseball games rained out by freak downpours last summer.

“The majority of the rain came from the remnants of Hurricane Dolores and suppressed demands for all of our customers,” says District analyst Cynthia Gray.

For Atwater, a San Joaquin Valley town of about 29,000, the solution came in the form of community volunteers. Two police volunteers and one designated “water cop” issued warnings and notices while they were out on their routes.

Greg Olzack, a former mayor and city council member of Atwater, became a volunteer “water cop,” driving around the town to write citations for water wasters. *(Kathy Thornburg)*

The water cop was none other than Atwater’s former mayor Greg Olzack.

The retiree donned a uniform and a city badge while driving around in a police vehicle four to five times a week looking for water wasters, often starting before dawn.

“People ask why I get up so early and I say, ‘it’s like fishing, that’s when they are biting,’” says Olzack. Atwater banned watering altogether on certain days and between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. on others.

Olzack and his crew issued 850 citations from July to October, for over-watering or watering on the wrong day.

“You don’t like to fine people but unfortunately that’s how you get people’s attention.”

Larger water agencies such as Santa Cruz and the Oakland-based East Bay Municipal Utilities District used similar strategies, but began lifting water restrictions as soon as [the state announced its intent](#) to revise the rules last week. Water agencies face a fundamental conflict in conservation; their revenues are based on how much water they sell. The more their customers conserve, the harder it hits the utilities’ bottom line.

### **Even State Mandates Didn’t Work Everywhere**

Some of the “least improved” water districts — those that met their targets in June and then slipped off the wagon — did so despite issuing thousands of fines.

In December, Vacaville issued 1,950 penalties for residents that used more than their assigned residential allocations, and added an extra 25 percent excessive consumption penalty to the customers’ bills.

The city started off on the right foot, exceeding its goal by nearly 4 percent in June, but by February its cumulative savings had dropped to 13 percent below its goal.

Vacaville Utilities manager Ramiro Jimenez says limiting lawn watering in the summer was easier for residents than trying to squeeze water use in winter.

“By then you’re relying more on indoor savings,” says Jimenez. “When you ask people to use less



indoors, like not washing dishes or clothes as often, it becomes tough for people to make that shift — it becomes a lifestyle change.”

Calexico, a border town in Imperial County that lost its conservation momentum over time, blames its shortage on reporting inaccuracies. Officials there say it switched to “smart” meters with software that wasn’t fully operational, and so had to estimate water use.

Neither of these “least improved” districts used tougher measures like [public shaming](#) or [prohibiting new swimming pools](#) from using potable water.

Questioned by KQED, several districts whose conservation performance declined the most over time cited extenuating circumstances.

Despite the mixed results, it’s clear that the system of enforceable state-imposed water restrictions resulted in substantial savings over all. It’s equally unclear what lifting these requirements will mean for long-term conservation in drought-prone California.

## Author



### Lindsey Hoshaw

Lindsey Hoshaw is an interactive producer for KQED Science. Before joining KQED, Lindsey was a science correspondent for The New York Times, The Boston Globe, Forbes and Scientific American. On Twitter [@lindseyhoshaw](#)

## Author

San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

## Water agency offers financial, physical assistance for new wells

*By Jim Steinberg, The Sun*

Tuesday, May 17, 2016

SAN BERNARDINO >> The board of the East Valley's water wholesaler on Tuesday approved a \$1.87 million package to tap an [emergency water supply for the federally endangered Santa Ana sucker](#).

And the staff of the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District, the water wholesaler, has offered to manage the engineering aspects of the project — as well as do the physical labor.

That offer — for the labor, not the money — was quickly rejected by the San Bernardino Municipal Water Department's top administrator, who cited regulatory sensitivity.

The Valley District funding would be used by San Bernardino to upgrade three test wells on the 50-acre San Bernardino-operated Rapid Infiltration and Extraction (RIX) wastewater treatment plant in Colton.

Valley Board members have expressed frustration over San Bernardino's projected timeline for the operation of the wells: March 2018.

Under the plan, those wells would automatically begin pumping and discharge water into the Santa Ana River when the RIX plant shuts down for maintenance.

Because of the drought, RIX shutdowns for an hour or more cause portions of the Santa Ana River go dry, killing some of the few remaining Santa Ana sucker in the process.

"The hard part has already been done. The wells are drilled," Doug Headrick, general manager of the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District, said in an interview after the drought.

Headrick said he has water well construction field experience and would be among the Valley District's labor force to help San Bernardino — if that would be allowed.

The death of those sucker fish following RIX shutdowns — and more than 140 deaths have been documented since June 2014 — is the subject of an investigation by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

More than 80 percent of the region's Santa Ana sucker live within two or three miles downstream of the RIX facility, Valley District officials say.

In declining Headrick's free labor offer, Stacey Aldstadt said in a text message that was because those three designated emergency wells would be feed into the RIX plant's discharge pipeline, flow that is regulated by the state of California.

"We wouldn't turn over construction management of such a critical, regulated item," Aldstadt wrote.



During a Valley Board workshop May 10, members expressed frustration over San Bernardino's projected timeline for the operation of the wells: March 2018.

In an interview last week, Valley District Board Chairman Mark Bulot, a Redlands-based geologist, said that if it were a three water well project starting from scratch, it would take about six months to complete.

But in this case, most of the difficult work has already been done, Bulot and other Valley District officials say.

However, Aldstadt said in the text message Tuesday that the proposal to activate the test wells would need approval from the Santa Ana River Basin Water Quality Control Board, a state agency.

This would be a time consuming process.

Additionally, the San Bernardino Water Department would need to run power to the wells, have to provide back-up power, and tie the pipeline from the wells into the RIX system.

"We will complete them as soon as realistically possible," she said.

Aldstadt did not attend Tuesday's meeting of the Valley District board.

Separately, the Valley board on Tuesday approved spending \$463,000 for a plan to breed sucker fish on land owned by the Riverside-Corona Resource Conservation District and [relocate them to several sites in the San Bernardino Mountains](#).

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URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/environment-and-nature/20160517/water-agency-offers-financial-physical-assistance-for-new-wells>

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[Science](#) / [Science Now](#)

# Nearly 8 in 10 public pools in CDC study failed routine safety inspections



Nearly 8 in 10 routine inspections of public pools turned up at least one violation of safety rules, according to a new report from the CDC. (Gina Ferazzi/Los Angeles Times)

By **Karen Kaplan**

MAY 19, 2016, 10:05 AM

**S**ummer's right around the corner, and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) are here to remind you that there's nothing like a dip in a public pool — a place where you might encounter tiny bits of fecal matter, parasites like *Cryptosporidium* and volatile chemicals that can irritate your eyes or respiratory tract.

A [report](#) published Thursday warns that nearly 8 in 10 routine inspections of public pools turned up at least one violation of safety rules. In addition, about 1 in 8 of these inspections found problems so serious that the pool had to be closed immediately.

These disheartening statistics are based on 84,187 routine inspections of 48,632 public pools and other “aquatic venues” in Arizona, California, Florida, New York and Texas. Researchers focused on these five

states because they are home to 40% of the nation's estimated 309,000 public water play facilities.

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The CDC created the Network for Aquatic Facility Inspection and Surveillance in 2013 to keep tabs on the safety of public pools. In the preceding 35 years, 650 outbreaks originating in public pools were reported to the federal agency. The largest of these happened at an indoor water park resort in Ohio in 2007, when chlorine mixed with sweat and urine in pool water to create chemicals called chloramines. Local health authorities tallied 665 cases of eye and respiratory tract problems among resort patrons and lifeguards.

None of this is to say that Americans would be better off if they stayed away from public pools. On the contrary, swimming and other “water-based physical activity improves physical and mental health,” Michele C. Hlavsa of the CDC's Division of Foodborne, Waterborne, and Environmental Diseases and her collaborators wrote in the new report, which appears in the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. What's more, they added, water-based exercise might be the only option for people with certain medical conditions.

Besides, swimming is a hugely popular pastime in this country. According to the Census Bureau, more than 50 million Americans over the age of 6 went swimming at least six times a year. So if public pools — at water parks, hotels, summer camps, apartment buildings, fitness clubs or municipal recreation facilities — aren't safe, a lot of people could suffer the consequences.

This is what prompted the CDC, along with the New York State Department of Health, to develop the Model Aquatic Health Code. Hlavsa and her coauthors set out to test how well the nation's five biggest public pool states were measuring up to the code.

Here's some of what they found:

- \* 79% of routine inspections turned up at least one code violation.
- \* The number of violations per inspection ranged from 0 to 21; the median number of violations was 2.
- \* 12% of routine inspections found a violation that resulted in the immediate closure of the facility.
- \* Among the most common violations were problems with a pool's pH level (seen in 15% of routine inspections); problems with safety equipment (13%); and problems with the concentration of disinfectants (12%).

The nearly 50,000 pools included in the analysis aren't necessarily a representative sample of public

pools throughout the country. That means the results reported by the CDC can't be generalized to all states or venues, the study authors cautioned. Even among the five pool-heavy states that participated in the study, some counties shared more inspection records than others.

Despite these limitations, "the findings of this report underscore the need to improve the operation and maintenance of U.S. public aquatic facilities to prevent illness and injury," the study authors concluded.

And that's just for the pools that got inspections. Consider this: "Currently, only 68% of U.S. local public health agencies regulate, inspect, or license public aquatic facilities."

So what's a swimmer to do? The CDC's advice is to visit a pool supply or hardware store and stock up on test strips that can measure the pH and disinfectants in the water. A healthy pool has a pH between 7.2 and 7.8. The concentration of chlorine should be at least 1 part per million in regular pool water and at least 3 ppm in a hot tub. For bromine, the concentration in pool water should be at least 3 ppm, and at least 4 ppm in a hot tub.

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LOCAL / CALIFORNIA

# The dark side of trendy food trucks: A poor health safety record



Food trucks in Los Angeles have scored poorly on health inspections.

By **Ben Poston, Caitlin Plummer and Michael Radcliffe**

MAY 18, 2016, 4:00 AM

**I**t's a daily culinary performance that plays out across Los Angeles: Top food truck chefs whipping up gourmet meals in spaces no bigger than a restaurant's stockroom or walk-in freezer.

But even as the trucks have become a popular staple of the local food scene, with Twitter followers and long queues, they have been lagging behind restaurants and even sidewalk food carts in one important category -- health safety, a Times data analysis found.

About 27% of food trucks earned lower than A grades over the last two years, according to a Times review of Los Angeles County Department of Public Health data. By comparison, slightly less than 5% of brick-and-mortar restaurants and about 18% of food carts fell below that mark.

More than 4% of food trucks inspected this year were forced to close -- a rate three times higher than

regular restaurants, the analysis shows. The health department has closed more than 70 food trucks this year, most of which were allowed to reopen after passing follow-up inspections.

Experts say food trucks face unique challenges to stay sanitary. Workers must do their jobs in confined spaces -- typically less than 8 feet wide by 20 feet long -- and trucks often lack the equipment of a full-sized restaurant.

That can lead to more cross-contamination, USC accounting professor Ruben Davila said.

“If I serve you and I also prepare the food, there’s a little bit of a problem right there with health issues, potentially,” said Davila, academic director of the Food Industry Management Program at USC.

Storage temperature is also more difficult in mobile cooking, so it must to be closely scrutinized to make sure ingredients don't spoil, he said.

Truck owners must also deal with the elements that come with being on the street rather than inside a building.

The Hungry Lion food truck at Loyola Marymount University was shut down April 6 after inspectors found a rodent infestation.

Mice had crawled into the truck through the engine manifold when it was not in service, said Dana Massimiani, director of operations for Loyola’s food service contractor Sodexo.

After inspectors found more than nine rodent droppings, the vehicle was sent back to the manufacturer to fix the issue, he said. The truck reopened two days later and received an A on its next inspection, records show.

More than 4% of food trucks received C grades, compared with fewer than 1% of restaurants, the analysis of [health department data](#) since May 2014 found. Inspectors visited more than 36,000 food sellers during that time.

Tacos Ariza, an Echo Park fixture at Sunset Boulevard and Logan Street, earned a C on a health inspection in early March.

Health inspectors noted 16 violations, including three major infractions after they found employees failed to wash their hands or use gloves properly, and did not keep food surfaces clean or food “safe and unadulterated.”

Employee Isabel Ariza said business was down after the blue C was posted in the window, but has improved since a reinspection in late March earned the food truck a B grade.



“

## **We try our best to be prepared but [inspectors] always try to find something. It's hard to get an A grade.**

— Isabel Ariza

Ariza said she and other workers strive to follow health regulations, but it's a constant struggle. The food preparation area and refrigerator are both small, which can lead to violations, she said.

“It's not as simple as it seems,” Ariza said. “It's hard to keep everything in one compact space. They really expect a lot from us. We try our best to be prepared but [inspectors] always try to find something. It's hard to get an A grade.”

The health department began inspecting food trucks in 2011. A Times report in 2014 found that inspectors reviewed only 40% of trucks and mobile food carts because of short-staffing and difficulty in locating the trucks when they were in operation.

James Dragan, the county's chief environmental health specialist for consultative services, agreed that a tighter work space could lead to more violations but stressed that his department has not yet studied its inspection data.

Inspectors now require trucks to submit route slips and have checked about 70% of them this fiscal year that ends in June, Dragan said.

The inspection process is the same for restaurants, food trucks and carts, according to the health department. Food sellers can receive major, minor and low-risk violations that result in point deductions starting at 100. To earn an A grade, a food facility can lose no more than 10 points.

Initial inspections are random, but each facility is allowed a reinspection if it is found to be out of compliance, health officials said. Every 12 months, facilities can also pay for an owner-initiated inspection after the initial inspection.

Inspectors look for health issues that pose a risk associated with food-borne illness outbreaks, including improper storage temperatures, contaminated equipment and poor personal hygiene, according to the health department.

Some food truck purveyors run a tight ship.

Housed inside a black and chrome rig, the La Estrella taco truck typically parks in a gas station lot at

Normandie Avenue and West Adams Boulevard in South L.A. In the window sits the familiar blue A.

To keep their truck in good shape, the La Estrella crew cleans at the end of each night and the owner comes by to make sure everything is in order for the next day.

“We like to be ready so we don’t have to get ready,” employee Rigo Torres said. “If we’re ready we don’t have to worry about inspection at all.”

On a recent evening in Pico-Union, Eunice Soto, 23, waited in line for the Tacos Tamix truck with its hard-to-see B grade posted in the window.

Soto wasn’t surprised about the lower grades of food trucks and said it wouldn’t stop her from gorging on late-night grub.

“I mean, it’s kind of iffy, but it’s good,” Soto said. “I’ll probably still keep coming here. As long as they don’t have anything lower than a B, I guess it’s OK.”

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NATION / NATION

# Colorado movie theater found not liable for 2012 mass shooting



A colorful sign decorates the entrance of the Cinemark Century 16 movie theater in Aurora, Colo. (Brennan Linsley / Associated Press)

By **Associated Press**

MAY 19, 2016, 10:50 AM

**T**he owner of a Colorado movie theater could not have prevented a 2012 shooting that killed 12 people, a jury decided Thursday after victims argued that lax security allowed for the attack.

The six jurors concluded that Cinemark was not liable for the rampage, siding with the nation's third-largest theater chain in a civil case closely watched by the country's major theater companies. The jurors deliberated for about three hours.

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Several survivors of the attack and relatives of the dead had sued the suburban Denver theater, saying it lacked armed guards during the crowded midnight premiere of a Batman movie. There also was no

silent alarm that would have sounded when [James Holmes](#) slipped into an auditorium and started shooting.

The company argued that no security measures would have predicted or stopped the armor-clad Holmes. After months of meticulous planning, he threw gas canisters into the crowd of more than 400 and then opened fire with a shotgun, assault rifle and semiautomatic pistol.

Holmes was [sentenced to life in prison](#) last year after a different group of jurors failed to agree unanimously that he deserved the death penalty.

Cinemark attorney Kevin Taylor called it the first mass shooting at a theater "in the history of American cinema," arguing such shootings are still so rare that management could not have anticipated one at a theater with no history of serious violence.

The 28 victims who sued in state court said Cinemark should have foreseen the potential for violence, with more than 1,000 people expected for the opening of the summer blockbuster.

If Cinemark had lost the case, it could have forced theater companies across the U.S. to adopt costly security measures that could have increased ticket prices significantly, experts said.

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